



OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PO BOX 202501
HELENA MT 59620-2501
www.opi.mt.gov
(406) 444-3095
(888) 231-9393
(406) 444-0169 (TTY)

Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

September 21, 2005

TO: Montana School Business Officials

FROM: Jim Oberembt
Fiscal Officer

RE: Montana Schools E-Learning Consortium (MSELCL)

Over 35 Montana school districts formed a consortium to purchase distance learning services. The name of the consortium is Montana Schools E-Learning Consortium (MSELCL). A unique feature with this program is that home school children may participate if they enroll in their resident school district and the school district offers the students a complete accredited program as provided in SB359. The resident school would pay the consortium a fee, around \$500, however, the school district will receive at least ¼ ANB to offset this cost. The payment to the consortium would be coded from the general fund as X01-170-1000-321. The tuition fund may not be used to pay this fee.

There are two payments which may come from the MSELCL. The first payment could be a reimbursement for teachers attending training. The second payment could be for providing distance learning services. In the first case, if the teacher was paid from the general fund, the school district could account for the reimbursement as expenditure abatement. If the teacher was paid from Fund 15 under the 30-day receivable rule, the reimbursement could be treated as an expenditure abatement or coded to revenue source 1900 Miscellaneous Revenue.

In regards to the second payment for providing distance learning services, school districts should consider, initially, establishing a local project in Fund 15 to account for this activity. Depending upon how the program evolves, OPI may recommend districts establish a miscellaneous enterprise fund in the future. The unique nature of the program, where instructional services could be provided to district students and out-of-district students, poses a dilemma in determining the appropriate fund to use to account for the activity. Again, as the program evolves, auditors and school business officials may get a clearer picture of exactly what fund to use to account for this activity.

When coding the payment for distance learning services from the consortium, initially, deposit the payment to Fund 15 and use revenue source 1950 Services Provided to Other School Districts or Cooperatives. Expenditures should be coded using expenditure program 170 Distance Learning, function 1000 for Instruction or 2213 for In-service Training with any appropriate object code.

Dave Puyear is the consortium project director and the project manager is Leanne West. She may be reached at 449-3430 or by email at lw@mselc.org. For full details about the consortium visit <http://www.mselc.org/>. If you have any accounting questions, please contact me at 444-1257 or email at job@mselc.org or Denise Ulberg at 444-1960 or email at du@mselc.org.

"It is the mission of the Office of Public Instruction to improve teaching and learning through communication, collaboration, advocacy, and accountability to those we serve."